AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system comprising:

a server computer;

a network computer operatively coupled to said server computer, said network computer comprising a <u>first</u> single-write data storage device and an operational event controller operatively coupled to said <u>first</u> single-write data storage device, said operational event controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said operational event controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to periodically check with a <u>first</u> gaming apparatus to determine <u>when</u> ~~if~~ an operational event has occurred<u>,</u> [[;]]

said operational event controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to retrieve operational event data,

said operational event controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to permanently store said operational event data on said <u>first single-write</u> data storage device, and

said operational event controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to communicate said operational event data to said server computer upon a request from said server computer for said operational event data<u>;</u> [[,]]

<u>a second data storage device operatively coupled to said network computer, the second data storage device configured store said operational event data stored on the first single-write data storage device;</u>

a <u>first</u> plurality of <u>first</u> gaming apparatuses operatively coupled to said network computer, each <u>first</u> gaming apparatus comprising:

a display unit,

a value input device, and

a <u>first</u> controller operatively coupled to said display unit and said value input device, said <u>first</u> controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said <u>first</u> controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to cause said display unit to generate a game display relating to a game,

said <u>first</u> controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said game, and

said <u>first</u> controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to receive periodic checks from said operational event controller and to communicate said operational event data

to said operational event controller, said operational event data comprising one or more of the following data types: accounting data, cashless data, security data, player tracking data and maintenance data.

2.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 1 further comprising a plurality of server computers, wherein said operational event controller is configured ~~programmed~~ to communicate said operational event data to a particular server computer based on said data type.

3.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 1, further comprising a plurality of said network computers operatively coupled to said server computer and each disposed in a different geographic location, wherein:

said operational event controller is configured ~~programmed~~ to communicate said operational event data to an operational event controller of at least one of said plurality of network computers, and

said operational event controller is configured to ~~programmed~~ receive operational event data from an operational event controller of at least one of said plurality of network computers.

4.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 1, wherein said gaming system comprises a government-sponsored gaming system.

5.   (Original) A gaming system as defined in claim 1, wherein said gaming system comprises a casino gaming system.

6.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus comprising:
a display unit;
a value input device;
a single-write data storage device;
a controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said value input device and said data storage device, said controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,
said controller being programmed to cause said display unit to generate a game display relating to one of the following games: poker, blackjack, slots, keno or bingo,

said controller being programmed to communicate data representing operational events on said gaming apparatus to said single-write data storage device,

said controller being programmed to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said game,

said controller being programmed to issue a ticket voucher comprising at least a portion of said operational event data and said value payout.

7.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said display unit comprises a video display unit that is capable of generating video images.

8.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 7,

wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of at least five playing cards to be displayed if said game comprises video poker,

wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels to be displayed if said game comprises video slots,

wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of a plurality of playing cards to be displayed if said game comprises video blackjack,

wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of a plurality of keno numbers to be displayed if said game comprises video keno,

wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of a bingo grid to be displayed if said game comprises video bingo.

9.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said display unit comprises at least one mechanical slot machine reel.

10.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write solid state memory.

11.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write optical disk and an optical disk drive.

12.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write magnetic disk and a magnetic disk drive.

13.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said controller is programmed to encrypt said operational event data.

14.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said controller is programmed to insert one or more digital watermarks in said operational event data.

15.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said operational event data comprises one or more of the following data types: accounting data, cashless data, security data, player tracking data and maintenance data.

16.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein
said controller is programmed to issue a ticket voucher comprising one or more of the following information types: a number of games played by a player on said gaming apparatus, an amount won by the player on said gaming apparatus, an amount lost by said player on said gaming apparatus, an amount wagered by said player on said gaming apparatus, a number of coins inputted by said player to said gaming apparatus, a number of bills inputted by said player to said gaming apparatus, an identification of said gaming apparatus, an identification of a casino where said gaming apparatus is disposed, a time and a date,
wherein said controller is programmed to communicate said information types of said ticket voucher as operational event data to said single-write data storage device.

17.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said game comprises a government-sponsored lottery game.

18.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said game comprises a casino game.

19.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein said gaming apparatus is disposed in a casino.

20.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6 further comprising a housing, wherein said value input device, said data storage device and said controller are located within said housing.

21.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 6 further comprising:
a memory buffer; and

an operational event controller operatively coupled to said data storage device, said controller and said memory buffer, said operational event controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said operational event controller being programmed to retrieve said operational event data from said controller;

said operational event controller being programmed to communicate said operational event data to said memory buffer,

said operational event controller being programmed to periodically transfer said operational event data from said memory buffer to said single-write data storage device,

wherein said controller is programmed to communicate said operational event data to said operational event controller.

22.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said memory buffer comprises non-volatile memory.

23.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system of claim 1, further comprising a second plurality of second gaming apparatuses as defined in claim 6 , said second gaming apparatuses being interconnected to form a network of second gaming apparatuses, each second gaming apparatus comprising:
a display unit;
a value input device;
a second single-write data storage device configured to store data representing operational events;
a second controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said value input device, and said second single-write data storage device, said second controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said second controller being configured to cause said display unit to generate a game display relating to a game,

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said second controller being configured to communicate data representing operational events on said second gaming apparatus to said second single-write data storage device,

  said second controller being configured to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said game.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 23, wherein each second controller is <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to communicate said operational event data to a <u>third</u> data storage device of at least one of said <u>second</u> plurality of <u>second</u> gaming apparatuses.

26. (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 23 ~~further comprising a~~ <u>wherein the</u> network computer <u>is</u> operatively coupled to each of said <u>second</u> gaming apparatuses, ~~said network computer comprising said data storage device, an operational event controller operatively coupled to said data storage device, said operational event controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,~~

  said operational event controller being <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to retrieve said operational event data from <u>the second</u> [[a]] controller of each of said <u>second</u> gaming apparatuses<u>.</u> ~~, and~~

  ~~said operational event controller being programmed to communicate said operational event data to said single-write data storage device.~~

27. (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 23 further comprising a plurality of server computers operatively coupled to said <u>second</u> plurality of <u>second</u> gaming apparatuses, wherein [[:]]

  ~~said controller is programmed to communicate said operational event data to said data storage device, said operational event data comprising one or more of the following data types: accounting data, cashless data, security data, player tracking data and maintenance data,~~

  said <u>second</u> controller is <u>configured</u> ~~programmed~~ to communicate said operational event data to a particular server computer based on said data type.

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28.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 23, wherein said second gaming apparatuses are interconnected via the Internet.

29.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus comprising:

a display unit;

a value input device;

a single-write data storage device;

a controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said value input device and said data storage device, said controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said controller being programmed to receive data representing a payline selection made by a player,

said controller being programmed to cause a game display to be generated by said display unit, said game display comprising images of a plurality of slot machine symbols each of which is associated with a respective slot machine reel of a slots game,

said controller being programmed to communicate data representing operational events on said gaming apparatus to said single-write data storage device,

said controller being programmed to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said slots game, said controller being programmed to determine said outcome of said slots game based on a configuration of said slot machine symbols,

said controller being programmed to issue a ticket voucher comprising at least a portion of said operational event data and said value payout.

30.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said display unit comprises a video display unit that is capable of generating video images.

31.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 30, wherein said controller is programmed to cause a video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels to be displayed on said display unit.

32.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said display unit comprises at least one mechanical slot machine reel.

33.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said controller is programmed to receive payline data representing a number of paylines selected by the player.

34.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write solid state memory.

35.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write optical disk and an optical disk drive.

36.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said single-write data storage device comprises a single-write magnetic disk and a magnetic disk drive.

37.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said controller is programmed to encrypt said operational event data.

38.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said controller is programmed to insert one or more digital watermarks in said operational event data.

39.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said operational event data comprises one or more of the following data types: accounting data, cashless data, security data, player tracking data and maintenance data.

40.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein:
said controller is programmed to issue a ticket voucher comprising one or more of the following information types: a number of games played by a player on said gaming apparatus, an amount won by the player on said gaming apparatus, an amount lost by said player on said gaming apparatus, an amount wagered by said player on said gaming apparatus, a number of coins inputted by said player to said gaming apparatus, a number of bills inputted by said player to said gaming apparatus, an identification of said gaming apparatus, an identification of a casino where said gaming apparatus is disposed, a time, a date and a player identification,

wherein said controller is programmed to communicate said information types of said ticket voucher as operational event data to said single-write data storage device.

41.   (Withdrawn) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 29 further comprising: a memory buffer; and

an operational event controller operatively coupled to said data storage device, said controller and said memory buffer, said operational event controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said operational event controller being programmed to retrieve said operational event data from said controller;

said operational event controller being programmed to communicate said operational event data to said memory buffer,

said operational event controller being programmed to periodically transfer said operational event data from said memory buffer to said single-write data storage device,

wherein said controller is programmed to communicate said operational event data to said operational event controller.

42.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system of claim 1, ~~further comprising a plurality of gaming apparatuses as defined in claim 1,~~ <u>wherein</u> said <u>first</u> gaming apparatuses <u>are</u> ~~being~~ interconnected to form a network of gaming apparatuses.

43.   (Cancelled)

44.   (Currently Amended) A gaming system as defined in claim 23, wherein each <u>second</u> controller is programmed to communicate said operational event data to [[a]] <u>the</u> <u>second</u> single-write data storage device of at least one of said <u>second</u> ~~plurality of~~ gaming apparatuses.

45.   (Cancelled)

46.   (Cancelled)

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47.   (Withdrawn) A memory having a computer program stored therein, said computer program being capable of being used in connection with a gaming apparatus, said memory comprising:

a memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to cause a game display representing one of the following games to be generated: poker, blackjack, slots, keno or bingo,

a memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to communicate data representing operational events on said gaming apparatus to a single-write data storage device, said operational event data comprising one or more of the following data types: accounting data, cashless data, security data, player tracking data and maintenance data,

a memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said one game, and

a memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to issue a ticket voucher comprising at least a portion of said operational event data and said value payout.

48.   (Currently Amended) The gaming system of claim 1, each first gaming apparatus further including a ticket printer, wherein said first controller is further configured or designed to cause said ticket printer to issue a ticket voucher comprising at least a portion of said operational event data.